
Glossary

Appropriate Use - a proposed or existing use on a refuge that meets at least one of the following three conditions: (1) The use is a wildlife-dependent use; (2) the use contributes to fulfilling the refuge purpose(s), the National Wildlife Refuge System mission, or goals or objectives described in a refuge management plan approved after October 9, 1997, the date the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act was signed into law; and (3) the use has been determined to be appropriate as specified in Section 1.11 of the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act.

Area of Influence (AOI) - a generalized area which contains lands of interest to the Service and within which the agency would analyze environmental impacts of a Proposed Action. The AOI for this project was limited to the North Carolina and Tennessee portion of the Blue Ridge Ecoregion. The AOI does not convey authority to establish rules and regulations and is only used to study the effects of a proposal on the human environment, including abiotic, biological, socioeconomic, and cultural resources.

Biological Diversity (or Biodiversity) - the variety of life and its processes, including the variety of living organisms, the genetic differences among them, and the communities and ecosystems in which they occur

Biological Integrity - biotic composition, structure, and functioning at genetic, organism, and community levels comparable with historic conditions, including the natural biological processes that shape genomes, organisms, and communities

Candidate Species - plants and animals for which the Service has sufficient information on their biological status and threats to propose them as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act, but for which development of a proposed listing regulation is precluded by other higher priority listing activities.

Categorical Exclusion - pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a category of federal agency actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment (40 CFR 1508.4).

Compatible Use - Compatible use means a wildlife-dependent recreational use or any other use of a refuge that, in the sound professional judgment of the refuge manager, will not materially interfere with or detract from the fulfillment of the mission of the Refuge System or the purposes of the refuge (National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, Public Law 105-57; 111 Stat. 1253).

Compatibility Determination - the process in which a wildlife-dependent use or any other public use on a refuge is found to be compatible or incompatible with the fulfillment of the Refuge System mission or the purposes of the refuge. This determination is a requirement for wildlife-dependent uses or any other public uses on a refuge.

Compatibility Policy - The refuge manager will not initiate or permit a new use of a national wildlife refuge or expand, renew, or extend an existing use of a national wildlife refuge unless the refuge manager has determined that the use is a compatible use (Service Manual 603 FW 2.3).

Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) - Mandated by the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997, a document that provides a description of the desired future conditions and long-range guidance for the refuge manager to accomplish purposes of the Refuge System and the

refuge. CCPs establish management direction to achieve refuge purposes (Public Law 105-57; Service Manual 602 FW 1.6).

Conservation Partnership Area (CPA) - An area, outlined for this proposal by the upper Paint Rock River watershed in Tennessee, within which the Service proposes to establish a refuge.

Cumulative Impact - According to NEPA, the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the Proposed Action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant actions, taking place over a period of time.

Easement - An agreement by which landowners give up or sell one of their rights on their property (e.g., landowners may donate rights of way across properties). It is a non-possessory interest in a real property owned by another imposing limitations or affirmative obligations with the purpose of returning or protecting the property's conservation values.

Environmental Assessment (EA) - A concise public document, prepared in compliance with NEPA, that discusses the purpose and need for an action, alternatives that were considered, and provides sufficient evidence and analysis of the action's effects to determine whether it is necessary to prepare an environmental impact statement (see immediately below) or a finding of no significant impact (40 CFR 1508.9).

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - A detailed, written analysis of the environmental effects of a Proposed Action, adverse effects of the project that cannot be avoided, alternative courses of action, short-term uses of the environment versus the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity, and any irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources (40 CFR 1508.1 1).

Fee Title - A real estate term that means the type of ownership used giving the owner the maximum interest in the land, entitling the owner to use the property in any manner consistent with federal, state, and local laws and ordinances.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) - Supported by an environmental assessment, a document that briefly presents why a federal action will have no significant effect on the human environment, and for which an environmental impact statement, therefore, will not be prepared (40 CFR 1508.13).

Land Protection Plan (LPP) - A document that identifies and prioritizes lands for potential acquisition by the Service from a willing seller, and also describes other methods of providing protection (e.g., easements). This document is released with environmental assessments.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1979 (NEPA) - Requires all agencies, including the Service, to examine the environmental impacts of their actions, incorporate environmental information, and utilize public participation in the planning and implementation of all actions. Federal agencies must integrate NEPA with other planning requirements and prepare appropriate NEPA documents to facilitate better environmental decision-making. NEPA requires federal agencies to review and comment on federal agency environmental plans and documents when the agency has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to the environmental impacts involved (42 U.S.C. 4321-4327 and 40 CFR 1500-1508).

National Wildlife Refuge - A designated area of land, water, or an interest in land or water within the Refuge System, but does not include Coordination Areas (Service Manual 603 FW 2.5 N).

National Wildlife Refuge System - All lands, waters, and interests therein administered by the Service as wildlife refuges, wildlife ranges, wildlife management areas, waterfowl production areas, coordination areas, and other areas for the protection and conservation of fish and wildlife, including those that are threatened with extinction as determined in writing by the Director or so directed by presidential or secretarial order. The determination by the Director may not be delegated (Service Manual 603 FW 2.5 I).

